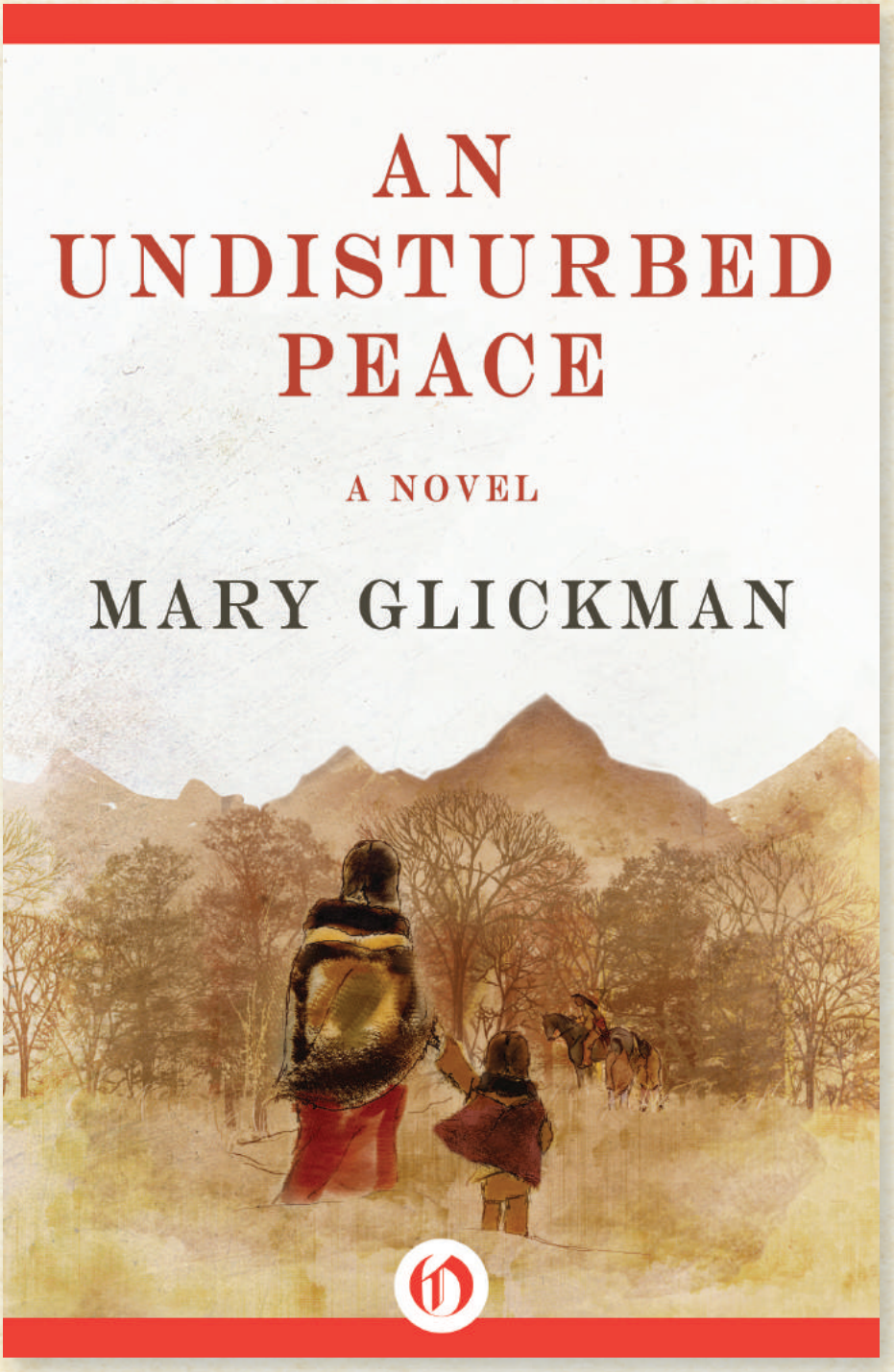

READER'S GUIDE

BACKGROUND

Westward Expansion in Early 19th-century America

The United States began as a small cluster of colonies running along the eastern coast, but as time passed and the population increased, European Americans found themselves looking west for the promise of cheap, fertile land.

In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson decided to make a purchase. For $15 million, the United States would buy 828,000 square miles of western territory from the French, doubling the size of the United States. Known as the Louisiana Purchase, the acquisition signaled Jefferson and the fledgling United States' increasing desire to expand westward, without regard to the legality of purchasing native-owned land from the French.

In an 1811 letter to John Adams, two years after leaving office, Jefferson addressed the Native American side of the deal: "But the backward will yield, & be thrown further back. These will relapse into barbarism & misery, lose numbers by war & want, and we shall be obliged to drive them, with the beasts of the forest, into the Stony mountains."[1]

President Andrew Jackson and the Indian Removal Act

War hero and Tennessee senator Andrew Jackson was elected president in 1829. Considered by many to be the first populist president, Jackson had little regard for due process. He had fought in three duels and promised to disband the national bank before his election, when he was given unlimited authority to deal with the native population of the United States.

During Jackson's years as president, he agreed to over 60 treaties with the Native American tribes in the Northeast and the South; however, these agreements were ultimately replaced by the Indian Removal Act of 1830. While the act appeared to outline treaty negotiations, its true purpose was to give the president of the United States power to move the native populations, to have value of the land for potential further removal.

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[1] http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/jefferson/178.html

[2] "1838: Cherokee Die on Trail of Tears." *Native Voices.* Accessed July 29, 2015, http://www.nlm.nih.gov/nativevoices/timeline/296.html

[3] "Cooking." *Cherokee Nation.* Accessed July 29, 2015,

The act was popular with Southerners who wanted the land occupied by tribes such as the Cherokee and Seminole, particularly areas of Georgia where gold had been discovered in 1829.

As early as the 1780s, the American populace and their representatives in Congress were interested in claiming native land. "The Five Civilized Tribes"—the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, Seminole, and Cherokee—sought to avoid this loss of land by assimilating "white values." They kept slaves, used European clothing and farming methods, and sought to be respected as sovereign nations under the laws of the United States.

But by the 1830s, the majority of the American population believed it was their right to expand westward and perceived the Native Americans as an obstacle to what was later called "manifest destiny."

Trail of Tears

In 1838, approximately 18,000 Cherokee were forcibly removed from their lands and relocated to "Indian Territory," a portion of present-day Oklahoma. Along the 1,200 mile march through the South, around 6,000 Cherokee died of hunger and disease.[2] Though the Trail of Tears is often associated with the Cherokee, the most populous of the five tribes, it also refers to the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, and Seminole removal.

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[2] "1838: Cherokee Die on Trail of Tears." *Native Voices.* Accessed July 29, 2015, http://www.nlm.nih.gov/nativevoices/timeline/296.html

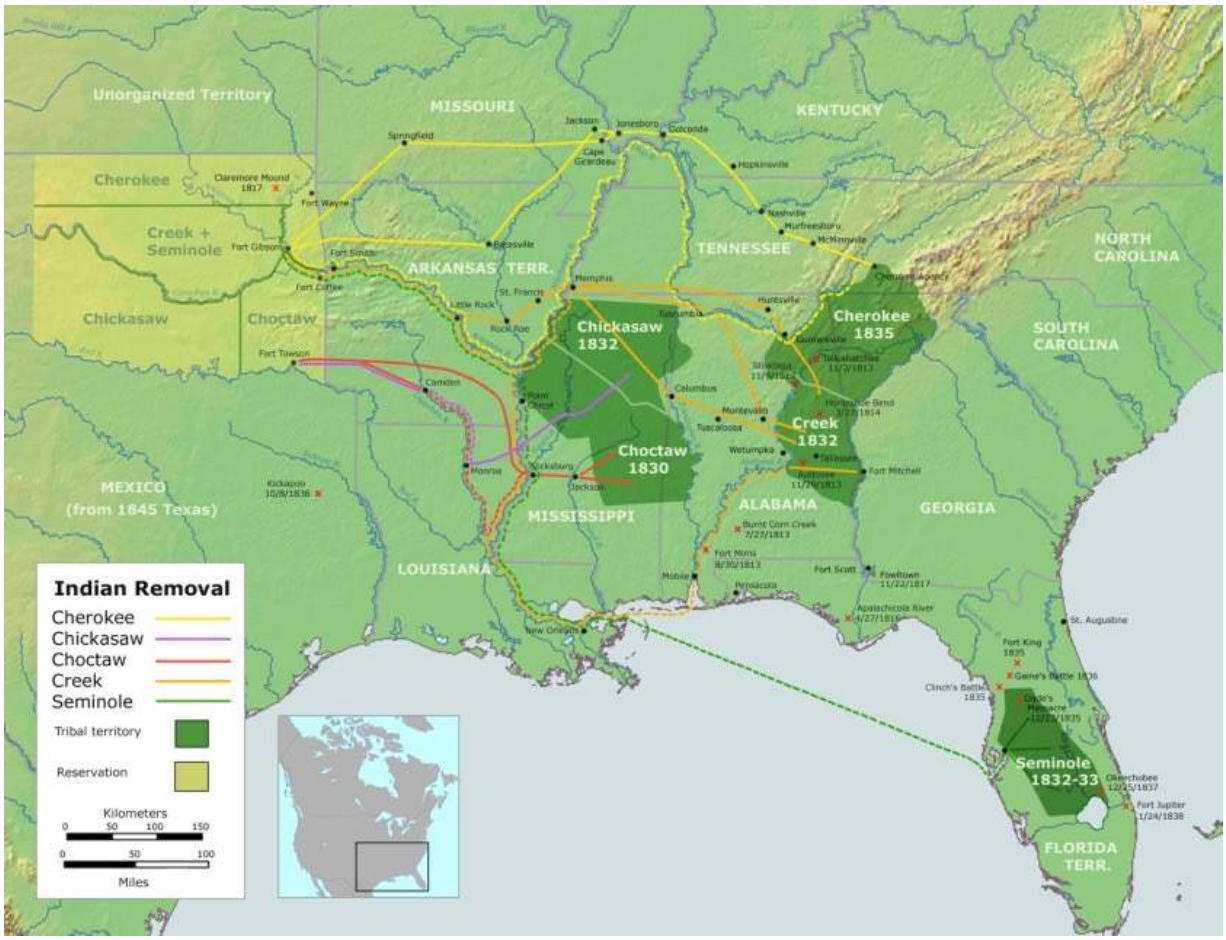

Image from http://www.nlm.nih.gov/nativevoices/assets/timeline/000/000/039/39_w_full.jpg

Slavery in the early 19th Century

By the 19th century, the Southern cotton industry was fully dependent on slave labor, while the northern economy developed as an industrial and manufacturing center. The northern states abolished slavery, creating a division between slave and non-slave states. As new territories entered the union, slavery became a matter of national debate.

In 1820, politician Henry Clay devised a solution, agreeable to both sides, called the Missouri Compromise. This statute forbid slavery in the new Louisiana Territory above the 36° 30′ Parallel, and this placated most politicians until 1850.

TIMELINE OF CULTURAL, HISTORICAL, AND FICTIONAL EVENTS

DATE	EVENT
1784	*Jacob is born*
1793	*Dark Water is born*
1795	Following the end of the Northwest Indian War, by the Treaty of Greenville several Native American tribes are forced to surrender much of present-day Ohio to the United States government
1803	Louisiana Purchase
1808	Osage Treaty is signed, and Sioux surrender present-day Missouri and Arkansas
1809	*Abrahan is born*
1812	War of 1812 *Jacob confesses to the murder of Bill Rupert*
1813–1814	The Creek War (or The Red Stick Wars). The war ends with the Treaty of Fort Jackson, in which the Creek Nation surrenders half of Alabama and parts of Georgia to the United States. The Cherokee Nation was allied with the United States against the Creek *Jacob fights in the Creek War for the Cherokee and is injured in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend*
1816–1819	First Seminole War
1820	The Missouri Compromise makes slavery illegal above the Mason-Dixon line (36°30′)

1826 The Treaty of Washington declares that Creeks must cede much of the Georgian land to the United States

1828 Congress passes the controversial Tariff of 1828, or "Tariff of Abominations," a tax on imported goods that disproportionately affects the Southern economy.
Abrahan meets Marian in the foothills of North Carolina

1829 Andrew Jackson is inaugurated as the 7th president of the United States. Jackson calls for the removal of the Seminole, Choctaw, Creek, Chickasaw and Cherokee tribes from the Southeastern states
Abe returns to the foothills for Marian

1830 Indian Removal Act is passed
The Sassaporta rubber is found faulty

1831 *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*—The Cherokee Nation seeks a federal injunction against Georgian laws depriving the Cherokee people of their land rights; the court rules the Cherokee a "dependent nation" subject to the guardianship of the United States, removing their rights as a sovereign nation and crippling Cherokee commerce

Choctaw Removal begins

1832 Sauk leader Black Hawk leads an unsuccessful rebellion in Illinois and Michigan Territories

Worcester v. Georgia—The Supreme Court rules that only the Federal government can make laws regarding natives

First attempted Seminole removal begins with Treaty of Payne's Landing

1834 Nonintercourse Act of 1834 creates Indian Territory—all land west of the Mississippi, save for Missouri, Louisiana, and Arkansas

1835 Creek Removal begins

Treaty of New Echota forces Cherokee to give up private and tribal land in exchange for space in Indian Territory

1835–1842 Second Seminole War

1837 Chickasaw Removal begins

1838 "Trail of Tears"—Cherokee Nation is forcibly relocated to Oklahoma

ENRICHMENT

Get into the mood to discuss *An Undisturbed Peace* with the following books, documentaries, and food.

Books written in 1820s and 1830s

- *The Last of the Mohicans*, by James Fenimore Cooper (1826)
- *David Cusick's Sketches of Ancient History of the Six Nations*, by David Cusick (1828)
- *Democracy in America*, by Alexis de Tocqueville (1835)
- *Nature*, by Ralph Waldo Emerson (1836)
- *The Fall of the House of Usher*, Edgar Allan Poe (1839)
- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*, by Frederick Douglass (1845)

Relevant Documentaries and Films

- *Trail of Tears: A Native American Documentary Collection* (2010). This collection consists of four documentaries: *Trail of Tears: Cherokee Legacy* (2006), *Native American Healing in the 21st Century*

(1997), *Black Indians: An American Story* (2000), and *Our Spirits Don't Speak English: Indian Boarding School* (2008).

- *Slavery and the Making of America* (2005). A series on the origins of slavery in the American continent. The four-part series spans over 200 years of history, shedding light on both the larger historical context and the lives of individual slaves.
- *The Jewish Americans* (2008). Narrated by Liev Schreiber, this documentary takes viewers on 350-year journey from 1654 to the present day and focuses on the difficulty of maintaining Jewish identity amidst pressure to assimilate.

Recipe

Cooking was and is one of many parts of the traditional Cherokee woman's role—not just for sustainability and necessity, but for social and communal reasons, too. According to the Cherokee Nation's official site, "as a matrilineal society, it is the woman who carries the clan, she who gives nourishment to the growing infant by providing it with her milk. She continues to nourish all who come to her home by providing lovingly prepared food."[3] Yam cakes are a traditional Cherokee dish, characterized by the sweet and flavorful yams they're baked with.

Cherokee Yam Cakes

Yields 16 Servings

Ingredients

1 cup mashed yams or sweet potatoes
2 cups sifted flour
1 1/2 tsp sugar
1 1/2 tsp salt
2 1/2 tsp baking powder
1/2 cup oil
1/2 cup milk

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[3] "Cooking." *Cherokee Nation.* Accessed July 29, 2015, http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/Culture/CookBook/Cooking.aspx

Method

1. Sift flour, baking soda, sugar and salt into a bowl.
2. Pour oil and milk into a measuring cup, but do not stir.
3. Add yams, making sure to blend well.
4. Add to flour mixture and mix lightly with fork, until the mixture holds together.
5. Turn dough out onto a floured board and knead until smooth (about 12 kneading strokes)
6. Roll dough about 1/4 thick and cut into rounds with floured biscuit cutter.
7. Place rounds on a baking sheet.
8. Bake at 425° for 10-20 minutes.
9. Serve hot with butter and honey.

For more recipes check out:

Chiltoskey, Mary and Goingback. *Cherokee Cooklore: To Make My Bread*. Mary and Goingback Chiltoskey, 1951.

Q&A WITH MARY GLICKMAN

In historical fiction it would appear that the author must both make her characters relatable to contemporary readers and historically authentic. When creating characters and dialogue, how do you strike the balance of staying true to the time period and connecting with a modern audience?

As the saying goes, times may change but people never do. I find it most useful to engage the reader on the historic level through setting and event, using language in dialogue that is tinted with period flavor while avoiding the anachronistic. As for engaging them on a modern level—the human heart will always struggle with the same passions, desires, flaws, and virtues of character. These elements are immemorial and I have confidence that the modern reader will recognize him/herself in their portrayal.

In your Author's Note, you say that by creating an accurate vision of everyday activities and social habits, an author brings the historical novel to life, all the while ensuring that "she has not violated the honor of an ethnicity not her own." How does your process of character creation differ when creating a person who is outside your ethnicity?

First of all, there must be research! Those everyday activities and social habits inform character in every ethnicity. But, in a way, they are cues only. Just as I point out above, comprehending the universality of human experience is key in expressing historical character and dialogue. Different ethnicities may express human frailties and human strengths through different cultural portals, but those frailties and strengths are the same for everyone. Which human qualities a particular ethnicity has come to emphasize through its culture can depend on historic experience. A warrior culture, for example, will prize bravery and stoicism. A merchant culture will prize prudence and economy.

Often in An Undisturbed Peace, *Abe notes cultural similarities between Jews and Cherokees, but these instances are diverse in genesis. Such points of diversity are where the author must be especially sensitive.*

Abrahan, Jacob, and Dark Water all seem to have something in common: They're outsiders in their communities. Jacob relates more to the Cherokee than his fellow slaves, Dark Water leaves her people to live in the mountains, and Abrahan was forced to leave London because of a stigma against Jews. What attracts you to writing about outsiders?

Easy! I am one! First from birth, as the middle child of a large family. Second, as a creative in my growing up and student years. Third, as a converted Jew. Fourth, as a creative my entire adulthood. Hardly anyone understands artists. Often, not even other artists. We're all such queerly independent thinkers. Specifically, as a writer, I find it's important to be outside looking in, ever the quiet observer, even when I'm being noisy. And if you get that, you're probably an outsider, too.

Why did you choose to use Abrahan as the window onto this tragedy as opposed to Dark Water?

I enjoy writing from the male perspective. I couldn't tell you why. In the past, I've taken my own attitudes and perceptions as a female and injected them into a male character. I was told later by readers that they fell in love with him, that he was the most attractive male character they'd ever read. That gave me a chuckle.

In An Undisturbed Peace, *I wanted Dark Water to possess a larger-than-life quality without making her a New Age cartoon. To achieve that I needed a measure of narrative distance from her, a reverence, perhaps, which is why we see her largely through Abe's eyes.*

The Cherokee woman was uniquely empowered before the European invasion. When the Europeans first negotiated treaties with the Cherokee, they were astounded that women were involved in the negotiations as members of the General Council. The Cherokee were astounded that the Europeans brought no female negotiators with them. Eventually, that feminine role became somewhat degraded through European cultural dominance. This was a tragedy, of course, and tragic heroes like Dark Water are at narrative risk in our cynical age of becoming maudlin. I found that keeping her at a distance lent her a mythos that would prevent such diminishment.

What is your relationship with the characters your have created both while you are in the process of writing and once you have finished a novel?

This is one of those questions that flummox me a little. I know many authors claim to have a kind of mystical relationship with their characters, but I simply do not. My relationship with them is one of creator and created. They do not have free will except that I cannot make them do anything that is outside their created nature or they become artificial. So my goal is to make them authentic. If they are authentic, then the reader will be enthralled. If they are not, the reader will be either irritated or bored. Sometimes, an author must battle biases

readers bring to the table, and anticipating those biases is part of the creation process.

That being said, I do tend to be fond of my creations, even the villains. Since while I am occupied with their creation, I eat, sleep, dream, and think of them intensely, they linger in my mind when I'm done writing the piece. But that fades over time.

For those interested in learning more about the plight of Dark Water and her people during the Trail of Tears, what resources do you recommend?

The sources cited in this guide and in my Author's Note are excellent! If one is strongly interested in the Cherokee, nothing beats a trip to Cherokee, North Carolina or to Oklahoma City for the Cherokee museums and Native American centers there.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think Mary Glickman chose to call the novel "An Undisturbed Peace"?

2. How do the names of parts one and two, "Genesis" and "Exodus," contribute to our understanding of the novel?

3. How is the New World portrayed in Glickman's novel? What can we gather about 19th-century America?

4. Mary Glickman chooses a narrative structure that is not temporally continuous. Even though the story begins in 1828, she depicts events that transpired decades before by having her characters tell their own stories. Why do you think she chose to construct a narrative that is as grounded in storytelling as in present action?

5. How do Abe's motivations for action shift throughout the novel? Which characters cause Abe to change in the most dramatic ways?

6. How does Abe's relationship with Dark Water change over the course of the novel?

7. How are men and women portrayed in *An Undisturbed Peace* and what are their different roles in each society?

8. How does Abe receive the Cherokee and their culture? How does his personal and historical context contribute to his perspective?

9. Why do you think Mary Glickman included the scenes of Abe in Washington? From the text, does Washington appear to be connected to the reality of its policies? How do discussions of the Indian Removal Act in Washington differ from what is happening in the South?

10. When Abe speaks or thinks about Dark Water, he is inconsistent in which name he uses. What is the significance of his use of her Christian name, Marian, over her given name and vice versa?

11. On page 264, Abe tells Dark Water that her pride is a large part of who she is. Do you think this is true? What role does pride play in the events that transpire for Dark Water and for Abe?

12. On page 124, the narrator describes how Abe changes his religious traditions while in America: "For his own well-being, he went along with custom, tucking in his tzitzit, trading his yarmulke for a cap, and rarely declaring himself. Life was easier that way." How does Abe's Judaism affect his relationships with others in the novel? And what discoveries does he make about his identity as a Jew in America?

DICTIONARY

Mamzer	Hebrew (ממזר)—child born of a prohibited relationship; rough equivalent of the term bastard
Hashem	Hebrew (השם)—Directly translates to "the name"; term used for God
Mensch	Yiddish (מענטש)—A good or honorable person
Tzitzit	Hebrew (ציצית)—A tassel attached to a prayer garment (tallit) and an everyday garment (tallit katan)
Baruch Hashem	Hebrew (בָּרוּךְ הַשֵּׁם)—Thank God; literally "Blessed be the name"
Chuppah	Hebrew (חוּפָּה)—A wedding canopy
Mitzvah	Hebrew (מִצְוָה)—A commandment or a charitable deed
Shofar	Hebrew (שופר)—A horn used in religious ceremony
Yarmulke/Kippah	Yiddish (יאַרמולקע) / Hebrew (כִּפָּה)—a skullcap worn by Jewish men as a signifier of respect and awareness of a higher power

FURTHER READING

Historical Context

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